

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

February 12, 2013

Los Angeles County is the most complex voting jurisdiction in the country with 4.8 million registered voters, more than 5,000 polling places, and voter materials provided in twelve different languages. A voting system for L.A. County must support all these moving parts as well as frequent legislative changes to election rules. As the County's existing system is nearing the end of its useful life, the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) has undertaken an intensive study of voter needs and preferences to determine how best to replace it.

The RR/CC has found that our voters would best be served by the development of a custom-designed voting system which takes the above-listed and other key County-specific factors into consideration. Additionally, through field research conducted in partnership with Caltech and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Department has found that a publicly-owned system would elicit the highest level of public trust. Unfortunately, an upgraded voting system that would fully serve our needs and elicit the highest level of public trust is not currently certified for use in California.

Timing is also a problem. The RR/CC has promulgated a tight schedule under which the County would develop/acquire and pilot a new voting system in time for the UDEL (Uniform District Election Law) elections in fall, 2015, and plan for that system's certification and full implementation in time for the General Election in November, 2016.

MOTION

MOLINA _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

KNABE _____

ANTONOVICH _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

In order to best meet our voters' needs in accordance with the above timeframe, the County is seeking a number of changes to State law, including legislation that would allow the County to implement a new voting system on a pilot basis, and that would streamline the certification of voting systems in California by asking the Secretary of State to adopt testing standards and certify or conditionally approve all voting systems.

Additionally, the County will need funding to support the research and development/acquisition of the new system. Proposition 41, the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002, allocated \$200 million statewide to help counties upgrade voting systems. Of these funds, \$49.6 million were allocated to Los Angeles County, of which \$49 million remains unspent. Under the measure, bond funds may only be used for the purpose of purchasing voting systems already certified by the Secretary of State (Election Code Sec. 19234). This language may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the legislature (Election Code Sec. 19234.5). In order to allow the use of these funds for research and development purposes, a change to the implementing statutes of Prop 41 will be required.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the County's State Legislative Advocates to continue pursuing County-sponsored legislation to develop, acquire and implement a new voting system on a pilot basis, and to streamline the certification of voting systems in California by asking the Secretary of State to adopt testing standards and to certify or conditionally approve all voting systems; and

I FURTHER MOVE that the County's State Legislative Advocates be instructed to seek or support legislation that would give the County authorization to access Proposition 41 funds for research and development of its voting system.